

A MDO TIBETAN FOLKLORE FROM MGO MANG (GUOMAYING) TOWN, MANG RA (GUINAN) COUNTY, MTSHO LHO (HAINAN) TIBETAN AUTONOMOUS PREFECTURE, MTSHO SNGON (QINGHAI) PROVINCE, PR CHINA

G.yang skyabs rdo rje གཡང་སྐལ་འཕེལ་རྟེན། (Yangji Duo jie 杨吉多杰)\*

## ABSTRACT

In 2016, *dmangs glu*, proverbs, riddles, and stories were collected in ten villages - Ru sngun zhol ma (Rianxiuma), Smar khams (Mashigan), Tsha nag (Chanaihai), Glo rgya (Luoja), Jo ser (Jiaose), Sha rgya (Shajia), Brag dkar (Zhihai), Chos tsha (Qiezha), Ta ra (Dala), and Rdo ra (Duola) - and at Mang ra (Guinan) County Second Nationalities Middle School and Mgo mang (Guomaying) Town Nationalities Boarding School. All these sites are located in Mgo mang Town, Mang ra County, Mtsho lho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Mtsho sngon (Qinghai) Province, PR China. Sixty girls and sixty boys (primary and middle school students) were interviewed. Importantly, this folklore represents what these children knew at a time (2016) when the number of culture bearers who were knowledgeable in folklore was rapidly decreasing as interest in and use of social media increased exponentially. Although there are many examples of folklore published in Tibetan and other languages, some of the folklore presented here have not been previously published.

## KEYWORDS

Tibetan folklore collection, Tibetan children folklore, Mang ra (Guinan), Tibetosphere literature

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

In 2016, I collected the folklore presented here in ten villages and at Mang ra (Guinan) County Second Nationalities Middle School and Mgo mang (Guomaying) Town Nationalities Boarding School. The villages are Ru sngun zhol ma (Rianxiuma), Smar khams (Mashigan), Tsha nag (Chanaihai), Glo rgya (Luoja), Jo ser (Jiaose), Sha rgya (Shajia), Brag kar (Zhihai), Chos tsha (Qiezha), Ta ra (Dala), and Rdo ra (Duola). The villages and the schools are located in Mgo mang Town, Mang ra County, Mtsho lho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Mtsho sngon (Qinghai) Province, PR China.

Of the 120 students I interviewed (born 1999-2005), half were primary school students, and the others were junior middle school students. Sixty were females, and sixty were males. This collection of *dmangs glu*, proverbs, riddles, and stories is important in representing what the students knew in Mgo mang Town when they were interviewed (2016). Although there are many examples of folklore published in Tibetan and other languages, some of the folklore presented here has not, to my knowledge, been previously published. This material also provides an essential benchmark of what folklore existed in the focus villages at the time of collection.

\* G.yang skyabs rdo rje (Yangji Duo jie). 2021. A mdo Tibetan Folklore from Mgo mang (Guomaying) Town, Mang ra (Guinan) County, Mtsho lho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Mtsho sngon (Qinghai) Province, PR China. *Asian Highlands Perspectives* 60:304-343.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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 Bde skyid sgrol ma (b. 2003), Brag dkar Village  
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 Bkra shis bzang bo (b. 2001), Ru sngun zhol ma Village  
 Bla ma tshe ring (b. 2005), Rta ra Village  
 Bsod nams rdo rje (b. 2001), Sha rgya Village  
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 Lcags 'tsho sgrol ma (b. 2000), Smar khams Village  
 Lcags mo tshe ring (b. 2003), Chos tsha Village  
 Lha mgon rgyal (b. 2000), Rta ra Village  
 Lha mo sgrol dkar (b. 2004), Jo ser Village  
 Mgon po rdo rje (b. 2003), Smar khams Village  
 Mgon skyabs (b. 2003), Chos tsha Village  
 Mkha' 'gro tshe ring (b. 2003), Sha rgya Village  
 Mkha' rgyal thar (b. 2003), Brag dkar Village  
 Phag mo g.yang sgron (b. 2000), Glo rgya Village  
 Phag mo lhun grub (b. 2003), Sha rgya Village  
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 Rdo rje rgyal (b. 2003), Jo ser Village  
 Rdo rje skyid (b. 2003), Brag dkar Village  
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 Rin chen lha mo (b. 2001), Rta ra Village  
 Rin chen rdo rje (b. 2001), Ru sngun zhol ma Village  
 Rin chen skyid (b. 2002), Ru sngun zhol ma Village  
 Rin chen thar ba (b. 2002), Rta ra Village  
 Rta mgrin rdo rje (b. 2001), Brag dkar Village  
 Seng rdor (b. 2002), Rdo ra Village  
 Sgrol ma rgyal (b. 2003), Chos tsha Village  
 Snying dpal tshe ring (b. 2002), Brag dkar Village  
 Spyi 'du tshe ring (b. 2003), Tsha nag Village,  
 Tshe mdo skyid (b. 2003), Rdo ra Village  
 Tshe ring rgya mtsho (b. 2002), Glo rgya Village  
 Tshe ring sgrol ma (b. 2000), Jo ser Village  
 Tshe thar skyid (b. 2003), Rta ra Village

## ABBREVIATIONS

MCSNMS Mang ra County Second Nationalities Middle School  
 MTNBS Mgo mang Town Nationalities Boarding School

## DMANGS GLU

*Dmangs glu* are sung without instrumental accompaniment and are suitable for all audiences on happy occasions. *Dmangs glu* often praise mountains, rivers, forests, and environments that nurture people and compliment *bla ma*, parents, and well-known and kindhearted people.

*Dmangs glu* were sung by 'Brug 'bum skyid, Rta mgrin rdo rje, Rdo rje don grub, Chos dbyings rgya mtsho, Rin chen lha mo, Btsun mo yag, Don yod rdo rje, Kun thar rgyal, Gu ru rdo rje, Richen skyid, and Bka' 'gyur sgrol ma. They were recorded in August and September of 2016 in their villages and schools - MCSNMS and MTNBS.

Of the 120 students I interviewed, only these eleven children sang folksongs. Folksongs are not taught in schools. The *dmangs glu* presented here were learned by participating in cultural activities and imitating singers and family members. *Dmangs glu* are sung during Lo sar 'Tibetan New Year', weddings, and other festivals.

Elders enjoyed hearing children sing these songs. At school and while herding livestock, other children were the audience.

*DMANGS GLU ONE: WHEN I LEFT HOME THIS MORNING NGA DA NANGS YUL NAS YONG DUS SU*

<sup>1</sup> nga da nangs yul nas yong dus su	<sup>1</sup> ང་ད་ནངས་ཡུལ་ནས་ཡོད་དུས་སྟེ།	<sup>1</sup> When I left home this morning
<sup>2</sup> nga rta'ang med la sga'ang med	<sup>2</sup> ང་རྟ་འང་མེད་ལ་སྐྱའང་མེད།	<sup>2</sup> I had neither horse nor saddle
<sup>3</sup> rta rgyug pa'i khrom la thon dang na	<sup>3</sup> རྟ་རྒྱལ་པའི་ཁྲོམ་ལ་ཐོན་དང་ན།	<sup>3</sup> When I reached the horse race gathering
<sup>4</sup> nga rta'ang yod la sga'ang yod	<sup>4</sup> ང་རྟ་འང་ཡོད་ལ་སྐྱའང་ཡོད།	<sup>4</sup> I had both horse and saddle
<sup>5</sup> nga da nangs yul nas yong dus su	<sup>5</sup> ང་ད་ནངས་ཡུལ་ནས་ཡོད་དུས་སྟེ།	<sup>5</sup> When I left home this morning
<sup>6</sup> nga glu yang med la shags kyang med	<sup>6</sup> ང་གླུ་ཡང་མེད་ལ་ཤགས་ཀྱང་མེད།	<sup>6</sup> I had neither folksongs nor antiphonal songs
<sup>7</sup> glu len sa'i khrom la thon dang na	<sup>7</sup> གླུ་ལེན་སའི་ཁྲོམ་ལ་ཐོན་དང་ན།	<sup>7</sup> When I reached the folksong gathering
<sup>8</sup> nga glu yang yod la shags kyang yod	<sup>8</sup> ང་གླུ་ཡང་ཡོད་ལ་ཤགས་ཀྱང་ཡོད།	<sup>8</sup> I had both folksongs and antiphonal songs

('Brug 'bum skyid, Smar khams Village and Rta mgrin rdo rje, Brag dkar Village. Recorded MCSNMS, September 2016. Both sang the same song.)

*DMANGS GLU TWO: UPPER, MIDDLE AND LOWER STOD SMAD BAR GSUM*

<sup>1</sup> stod gan na shwa ba gnyis 'gro zhig	<sup>1</sup> སྟོད་གན་ན་ཤ་བ་གཉིས་འགྲོ་ཞིག	<sup>1</sup> Two deer in the upper place
<sup>2</sup> rwa ring thung med la yag re ltos	<sup>2</sup> རྩ་རིང་ཐུང་མེད་ལ་ཡག་རེ་རྟོས།	<sup>2</sup> See how beautiful they are with antlers of the same length
<sup>3</sup> bar gan na wa mo gnyis 'gro zhig	<sup>3</sup> བར་གན་ན་ཡ་མོ་གཉིས་འགྲོ་ཞིག	<sup>3</sup> There are two foxes in the middle place
<sup>4</sup> gre ring thung med la yag re ltos	<sup>4</sup> གེ་རིང་ཐུང་མེད་ལ་ཡག་རེ་རྟོས།	<sup>4</sup> See how beautiful they are with fur of the same length
<sup>5</sup> smad gan na glu ba gnyis 'gro zhig	<sup>5</sup> སྐད་གན་ན་གླུ་བ་གཉིས་འགྲོ་ཞིག	<sup>5</sup> Two singers in the lower place
<sup>6</sup> skad sbom phra med la yag re ltos	<sup>6</sup> སྐད་སྐྱོམ་པ་མེད་ལ་ཡག་རེ་རྟོས།	<sup>6</sup> See how beautiful are their voices of equal quality

(Rdo rje don grub, Smar khams Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

*DMANGS GLU THREE: SEEKING REFUGE SKYABS 'GRO*

<sup>1</sup> chos kyi mgo ma skyabs 'gro red	<sup>1</sup> ཆོས་ཀྱི་མགོ་མ་སྐྱབས་འགྲོ་རེད།	<sup>1</sup> Scripture recitation begins with taking refuge in the Three Jewels <sup>1</sup>
<sup>2</sup> chos skyabs 'gro ma bton 'don srol med	<sup>2</sup> ཆོས་སྐྱབས་འགྲོ་མ་བཏོན་འདོན་སྒྲུབ་མེད།	<sup>2</sup> There is no custom of not taking refuge before scripture recitation
<sup>3</sup> zas kyi mgo ma mchod kha red	<sup>3</sup> ཟས་ཀྱི་མགོ་མ་མཚོད་ལ་རེད།	<sup>3</sup> Meals start with an offering to the Three Jewels
<sup>4</sup> zas mchod kha ma 'phangs za srol med	<sup>4</sup> ཟས་མཚོད་ལ་མ་འཕངས་ཟ་སྒྲུབ་མེད།	<sup>4</sup> There is no custom of eating without an offering to the Three Jewels

(Rdo rje don grub and Chos dbyings rgya mtsho together, Smar khams Village. Recorded in the latter's home, August 2016.)

<sup>1</sup> The Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

**DMANGS GLU FOUR: THE EIGHTEEN LEVELS OF HEAVENS DGUNG A SNGON BANG RIM BCO BRGYAD YOD**

<sup>1</sup> dgung a sngon bang rim bco brgyad yod	<sup>1</sup> དགུང་ཨ་སྒོན་པང་རིམ་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་ཡོད།	<sup>1</sup> The heavens have eighteen levels
<sup>2</sup> bang rim re na 'brug re yod	<sup>2</sup> བང་རིམ་རེ་ན་འབྲུག་རེ་ཡོད།	<sup>2</sup> At every level, there is a dragon
<sup>3</sup> 'brug de ring mi grags nam re grags	<sup>3</sup> འབྲུག་དེ་རིང་མི་གྲགས་ནམ་རེ་གྲགས།	<sup>3</sup> If the dragon does not roar today, then when?
<sup>4</sup> gral khrom pa rim pa bco brgyad yod	<sup>4</sup> གྲལ་ཁྲོམ་པ་རིམ་པ་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་ཡོད།	<sup>4</sup> The festive gathering has eighteen rows
<sup>5</sup> rim pa re na shags re yod	<sup>5</sup> རིམ་པ་རེ་ན་ཤགས་རེ་ཡོད།	<sup>5</sup> In every row, there is a song
<sup>6</sup> shags de ring mi len nam re len	<sup>6</sup> ཤགས་དེ་རིང་མི་ལེན་ནམ་རེ་ལེན།	<sup>6</sup> If the songs are not sung today, then when?

(Rin chen lha mo, Rta ra Village and Btsun mo yag, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in their homes, August 2016).

**DMANGS GLU FIVE: THE LUCK OF TIBETANS BSOD NAMS BOD LA YOD**

<sup>1</sup> rta 'do ba'i pha sa 'brog na yod	<sup>1</sup> རྟ་འདོ་བའི་པ་ས་འབྲོག་ན་ཡོད།	<sup>1</sup> Horses come from the pastures
<sup>2</sup> sga lhu bzhi'i pha sa rong na yod	<sup>2</sup> སྐ་ལྷ་བཞིའི་པ་ས་རོང་ན་ཡོད།	<sup>2</sup> Saddles come from farming areas
<sup>3</sup> rta zhon pa'i bsod nams bod la yod	<sup>3</sup> རྟ་ཞོན་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་བོད་ལ་ཡོད།	<sup>3</sup> Tibetans have the luck to ride horses
<sup>4</sup> 'bri thul ma'i pha sa 'brog na yod	<sup>4</sup> འབྲི་ཐུལ་མའི་པ་ས་འབྲོག་ན་ཡོད།	<sup>4</sup> Female yaks come from the pastures
<sup>5</sup> shing gson dkar bzho ze'u rong na yod	<sup>5</sup> ཤིང་གསོན་དཀར་བཞོ་བེའུ་རེ་རོང་ན་ཡོད།	<sup>5</sup> Wooden milk pails come from farming areas
<sup>6</sup> 'bri bzho ba'i bsod nams bod la yod	<sup>6</sup> འབྲི་བཞོ་བའི་བསོད་ནམས་བོད་ལ་ཡོད།	<sup>6</sup> Tibetans have the luck to milk female yaks

(Don yod rdo rje, from Rta ra Village and Kun thar rgyal, from Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

**DMANGS GLU SIX: I WILL SING A SONG NGAS GLU ZHIG LEN**

<sup>1</sup> khyim 'di lha khyim gur khyim red	<sup>1</sup> ཁྱིམ་འདི་ལྷ་ཁྱིམ་གར་ཁྱིམ་རེད།	<sup>1</sup> This home is the abode of deities.
<sup>2</sup> ngas gur khyim 'dra ba'i glu zhig len	<sup>2</sup> ངས་གར་ཁྱིམ་འདྲ་བའི་གླུ་ཞིག་ལེན།	<sup>2</sup> I will sing a heavenly song.
<sup>3</sup> chang 'di bdud rtsi bsil ma red	<sup>3</sup> ཆང་འདི་བདད་ཅི་བསིལ་མ་རེད།	<sup>3</sup> This liquor is made of ambrosia.
<sup>4</sup> ngas bdud rtsi 'dra ba'i glu zhig len	<sup>4</sup> ངས་བདད་ཅི་འདྲ་བའི་གླུ་ཞིག་ལེན།	<sup>4</sup> I will sing an ambrosial song.
<sup>5</sup> mi 'di lha mi dpa' mi red	<sup>5</sup> མི་འདི་ལྷ་མི་དཔལ་མི་རེད།	<sup>5</sup> This man is a divine hero.
<sup>6</sup> ngas dpa' mi 'dra ba'i glu zhig len	<sup>6</sup> ངས་དཔལ་མི་འདྲ་བའི་གླུ་ཞིག་ལེན།	<sup>6</sup> I will sing a song like a hero.

(Gu ru rdo rje, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

*DMANGS GLU SEVEN: I LIKE TO SING SONGS NGA GLU LEN RGYUR DGA'*

<sup>1</sup> nga'i thod pa gor mo phyag la dga'	<sup>1</sup> ངའི་ཐོད་པ་གོ་མོ་ཕྱག་ལ་དགའ།	<sup>1</sup> My round forehead likes prostrations
<sup>2</sup> ngas phyag gsum 'tshal la glu zhig len	<sup>2</sup> ངས་ཕྱག་གསུམ་འཆལ་ལ་སྒྲུ་ཞིག་ལེན།	<sup>2</sup> I will sing while doing three prostrations
<sup>3</sup> nga'i mdzub mo lnga bo mchod la dga'	<sup>3</sup> ངའི་མཚུབ་མོ་ལྷ་བོ་མཆོད་ལ་དགའ།	<sup>3</sup> My five fingers like making offerings
<sup>4</sup> ngas mchod gsum 'phen na glu zhig len	<sup>4</sup> ངས་མཆོད་གསུམ་འཕེན་ན་སྒྲུ་ཞིག་ལེན།	<sup>4</sup> I will sing while making offerings
<sup>5</sup> nga'i mid pa phra mo glu la dga'	<sup>5</sup> ངའི་མིད་པ་ཕ་མོ་སྐལ་ལ་དགའ།	<sup>5</sup> My throat likes songs
<sup>6</sup> ngas mid pa bsal le glu zhig len	<sup>6</sup> ངས་མིད་པ་བསལ་ལེ་སྒྲུ་ཞིག་ལེན།	<sup>6</sup> I will sing while clearing my voice.

(Richen skyid, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016).

*DMANGS GLU EIGHT: THE IMPORTANT POSITION IN THE FAMILY KHYIM GOR RA GOR MO'I YAR RGYUD NA*

<sup>1</sup> khyim gor ra gor mo'i yar rgyud na	<sup>1</sup> ཁྱིམ་གོར་ར་གོར་མོའི་ཡར་རྒྱུད་ན།	<sup>1</sup> In the upper position of the house
<sup>2</sup> 'dzum mul le yod pa a pha red	<sup>2</sup> འཇུམ་མུལ་ལེ་ཡོད་པ་ཨ་པ་རེད།	<sup>2</sup> The one who smiles is the father
<sup>3</sup> zas zhim po yod na gan na byin	<sup>3</sup> ཟས་ཞིམ་པོ་ཡོད་ན་གན་ན་བྱིན།	<sup>3</sup> If you have good food, please offer it to him
<sup>4</sup> lo gcig gi thog nas gnyor ni red	<sup>4</sup> ལོ་གཅིག་གི་ཐོག་ནས་གཏོར་ནི་རེད།	<sup>4</sup> Because he cared for you since you were born
<sup>5</sup> khyim gor ra gor mo'i thab rtsa na	<sup>5</sup> ཁྱིམ་གོར་ར་གོར་མོའི་ཐབ་རྩ་ན།	<sup>5</sup> Near the stove in the house
<sup>6</sup> 'dzum dmul le yod pa a ma red	<sup>6</sup> འཇུམ་དམུལ་ལེ་ཡོད་པ་ཨ་མ་རེད།	<sup>6</sup> The one who smiles is the mother
<sup>7</sup> gos yag pa yod na gan na skon	<sup>7</sup> གོས་ཡག་པ་ཡོད་ན་གན་ན་སྟོན།	<sup>7</sup> If you have good clothes, please share them with her
<sup>8</sup> chung lo gcig steng nas gsos ni red	<sup>8</sup> ཆུང་ལོ་གཅིག་སྟེང་ནས་གསོས་ནི་རེད།	<sup>8</sup> Because she raised you when you were young
<sup>9</sup> khyim gor ra gor mo'i ka rtsa na	<sup>9</sup> ཁྱིམ་གོར་ར་གོར་མོའི་ཀ་རྩ་ན།	<sup>9</sup> Near the pillar of the house
<sup>10</sup> mig bgrad de yod pa phu bo red	<sup>10</sup> མིག་བབ་དེ་ཡོད་པ་ཕུ་བོ་རེད།	<sup>10</sup> The one who smiles is the brother
<sup>11</sup> tshig 'jam po yod na gan na shod	<sup>11</sup> ཚིག་འཇམ་པོ་ཡོད་ན་གན་ན་ཤོད།	<sup>11</sup> Please speak kindly to him
<sup>12</sup> chung lo gcig steng nas khur ni red	<sup>12</sup> ཆུང་ལོ་གཅིག་སྟེང་ནས་སུར་ནི་རེད།	<sup>12</sup> Because he cared for you since you were born

(Bka' 'gyur sgrol ma, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERBS

Proverbs are heard during weddings, negotiations, orations, and daily speech. Elders are fond of using proverbs in their speech as proverbs are quintessential in their discourse. I collected these proverbs during my interviews. The respondents learned these proverbs at home and school.

### PROVERB ONE

grogs stong yod na nyung stangs, dgra gcig yod na mang stangs

གྲོགས་སྟོང་ཡོད་ན་ཉུང་སྟངས། དང་གཅིག་ཡོད་ན་མང་སྟངས།

A thousand friends are too few, one enemy is too many.

(Bkra shis bzang bo, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

### PROVERB TWO

go ba med pa'i glang rgan la, rgyal bo'i bka' las dbyug pa btsan

གོ་བ་མེད་པའི་གླང་རྒྱལ་ལ། རྒྱལ་བོའི་བཀའ་ལས་དབྱུག་པ་བཙན།

A stick is more useful for a stubborn ox than the king's order.

(Bkra shis bzang bo, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

### PROVERB THREE

sha tsha ba'i tshig la snyan mo med, nad drag pa'i sman la zhim po med

ཤ་ཚ་བའི་ཚིག་ལ་སྙན་མོ་མེད། ནད་དྲག་པའི་སྐྱེན་ལ་ཞིམ་པོ་མེད།

Good advice is not pleasant to the ears; good medicine is not tasty.

(Bde skyid sgrol ma, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

### PROVERB FOUR

mgo lag pas skyor dang rgyag ni med, kha kha rog sdod dang kha mchu med

མགོ་ལག་པས་སྐྱོར་དང་རྒྱག་ནི་མེད། ཁ་ཁ་རོག་སྒོད་དང་ཁ་མཚུ་མེད།

Nobody beats you when you cover your head with your hand; no quarrel will arise if you say nothing.

(Btsun mo yag, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

### PROVERB FIVE

gzhan don bsgrubs na rang don zhor nas 'grub

གཞན་དོན་བསྐྱུར་ན་རང་དོན་ཞོར་ནས་འབྱུང།

Helping others is helping yourself.

(Btsun mo yag, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB SIX

rtswa yar skyes kyi rdzong mthug sa, chu mar 'bab kyi gting zab sa

རྩ་ཡར་སྟེན་གྱི་རྫོང་མཐུག་ས། ལྷ་མར་བའ་ཀྱི་གཏིང་ཟབ་ས།

The place where luxuriant grass grows; the place where deep water flows.

(Bsod nams rdo rje, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB SEVEN

'gro 'dod na rta pho chas kyis gsos, mkhas 'dod na rig pa'i gnas la sbyongs

འགོ་དོད་ན་རྟ་པོ་ཆས་ཀྱིས་གསོས། མཁས་དོད་ན་རིག་པའི་གནས་ལ་སྟོངས།

Feed your horse if you want to go far; study hard if you want to be knowledgeable.

('Brug 'bum rgyal, Chos tsha Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB EIGHT

snga dro 'dug mang na phyi dro 'dar mi chad

སྒང་འདྲུག་མང་ན་ཕྱི་དྲོ་འདྲུམ་མི་ཆད།

You need to work more in the afternoon if you rest too much in the morning.

(Rdo rje rgyal, Jo ser Village, Mgo mang Town, Mang ra County. Recorded in his home, June 2016.)

## PROVERB NINE

khyim la dgos pa rin chen bza' dpon, mi la dgos pa rin chen yon tan

ཁྱིམ་ལ་དགོས་པ་རིན་ཆེན་བཟའ་དཔོན། མི་ལ་དགོས་པ་རིན་ཆེན་ཡོན་ཏན།

The treasure a family needs is a leader (father); the jewel a human needs is knowledge.

(Rdo rje dngos grub, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TEN

a ma'i bu la yon tan yod na, dga' ldan khri la bdag po med

ཨ་མའི་བུ་ལ་ཡོན་ཏན་ཡོད་ན། དགའ་ལྷན་ཁྱིམ་ལ་བདག་པོ་མེད།

If a mother's child is knowledgeable, there are no certain owners for the Dga' ldan<sup>1</sup> throne. (If you have knowledge and skill, nobody takes your position.)

(Don yod don grub, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB ELEVEN

lha sku chung dka', yi ge che dka'

ལྷ་སྐུ་ཅུང་དཀའ། ཡི་གེ་ཆེ་དཀའ།

Difficult to make small statues; difficult to write letters of huge size.

(Don yod don grub, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

<sup>1</sup> Dga' ldan is a Dge lugs monastery located in the Tibet Autonomous Region.



## PROVERB TWELVE

ba nu ma can la bzho rgyu yod, tshig rtsa ba can la nyan rgyu yod

བ་ནུ་མ་ཅན་ལ་བཞོན་ཆུ་ཡོད། ཚིག་རྩ་བ་ཅན་ལ་ཉན་ཆུ་ཡོད།

A big uddered cow is good to milk; a profound sentence is good to listen to.

(Don yod don grub, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTEEN

'grul ba khyim gyi rgyan, rma bya nags kyi rgyan

འགྲུལ་བ་བྱིས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུན། མ་བྱ་ནགས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུན།

A guest adorns a home; a peacock adorns a forest.

(Don yod don grub, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FOURTEEN

rgya mtsho rtsib nas bskyur te, ko gyong mchu mas sbang ba

རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཅི་བ་ནས་བསྐྱར་རྟེ། ཀོ་གྲོང་མཚུ་མས་སྤང་བ།

Dry leather is moistened with saliva, even if you are by the sea.

(Dngos grub sgrol ma, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTEEN

kha nas tshig shor, lag nas rdo shor

ཁ་ནས་ཚིག་ཤོར། ལག་ནས་རྡོ་ཤོར།

Words escape from the mouth; stones escape from the hand.

(Gnam mtsho skyid, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB SIXTEEN

'brong gyen la rgyug na rwa rtse 'dzin ni, stag thur la rgyug na thong ga 'dzin ni

འབྲོང་གྱེན་ལ་རྒྱུག་ན་རུ་ཅེ་འཛིན་ནི། སྐྱག་ཐུར་ལ་རྒྱུག་ན་ཐོང་ག་འཛིན་ནི།

One who can hold the tip of a wild yak's horn as it runs uphill, and hold a tiger's chest as it runs downhill. (Very powerful and heroic.)

(Kun bzang skyid, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB SEVENTEEN

khyi mo shes nas zug, khyi phrug ma shes zug

བྱི་མ་ཤེས་ནས་རྩུག། བྱི་ཕུག་མ་ཤེས་རྩུག།

A female dog barks for a reason, its puppies bark for no reason.

(G.yang skyid sgrol ma, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB EIGHTEEN

mi khog mis mi lon, rdo khog chus mi lon

མི་ཁོག་མིས་མི་ལོན། རྡོ་ཁོག་ཆུས་མི་ལོན།

A person can't go inside another person; water can't go inside stones. (People cannot read each other's ideas).

(Gu ru rdo rje, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB NINETEEN

pha rgod po sha zan la, bu kha ta skyag zan skyes

ཕ་རོད་པོ་ཤ་ཟ་ཤ་ཤ། བུ་ཁ་ཏ་སྐྱ་ཟ་ཤ་ཤ།

A meat-eating vulture father; a shit-eating crow son.

(Gu ru rdo rje, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY

pho rab tshig thog, 'phar ba rjes thog

ཕོ་རབ་ཆེན་ཐོག་འཕར་བ་རྩེ་ཐོག་

A good man keeps his word; jackals follow their own tracks.

(Gnam lha thar, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-ONE

sbrang ma thig le can la stag mi zer, 'bu nag rwa co can la 'brong mi zer

སྤང་མ་ཐིག་ལེ་ཅན་ལ་སྟག་མི་ཟེར། འབྲུ་ནག་རྩ་ཅན་ལ་འབྲོང་མི་ཟེར།

A bee with stripes cannot be a tiger; a beetle with horns cannot be a wild yak.

(Gnam lha thar, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-TWO

kha nas bshad na lha bzhengs, lag la bzhag na snab lug

ཁ་ནས་བཤད་ན་ལྷ་བཞེངས། ལག་ལ་བཞག་ན་སྦྱབ་ལུག་

One boasts that he can build a Buddha statue, but when you put the work in his hands, he can do nothing but show a runny nose. (Saying is easier than doing.)

(Klu mo 'tsho. Recorded at her home in Glo rgya Village, June 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-THREE

khyed stag la mchong rtsal bco brgyad yod na, nga wa la 'dzul khung bcu dgu yod

ཁྱེད་སྟག་ལ་མཆོང་རྩ་ལ་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་ཡོད་ན། ང་ལ་ལ་འདྲུ་ཁུང་བཙུ་དགུ་ཡོད།

If you, a tiger, have eighteen different jumping skills; I, the fox, have nineteen holes to go inside. (I have my skills; you have your skills.)

(Klu rgyal tshe ring, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-FOUR

kha mkhas na mkhas pa min, khog mkhas na mkhas pa yin

ཁ་མཁས་ན་མཁས་པ་མིན། ཁོག་མཁས་ན་མཁས་པ་ཡིན།

You lack knowledge if you can only talk a lot; you are intelligent if you know a lot inside your heart.  
(One with knowledge in their mouth is not really knowledgeable; one with knowledge in the heart is.)  
(Klu rgyal tshe ring, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-FIVE

shing skyon med rgya rdzong nags na med, mi skyon med 'dzam po gling na med

ཤིང་སྟོན་མེད་རྒྱ་རྫོང་ནགས་ན་མེད། མི་སྟོན་མེད་འཛམ་པ་གླིང་ན་མེད།

There are no trees without knots in the forest; there are no perfect people in the world.  
(Lcags 'bum rgyal, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-SIX

pha bzang gi bu, g.yag bzang gi ko

ཕ་བཟང་གི་བུ། གཡལ་བཟང་གི་ཀོ།

Son of a good father; leather of a good yak.  
(Lcags 'bum rgyal, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-SEVEN

sngon sdug gzhug skyid

སྟོན་སྐྱུ་གཞུག་སྟེན།

Face difficulties early, relax later.  
(Jigs byed 'tsho, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-EIGHT

mda' mo bzhin du drang dgos, ka rdo bzhin du brtan dgos

མདའ་མོ་བཞིན་དྲུང་དགོས། ཀ་ར་བཞིན་དྲུང་དགོས།

Be as straight as an arrow, stable as the base of a stone-pillar.  
(Jigs byed 'tsho, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB TWENTY-NINE

zha nye 'big gis ko mi phug, bka' log tshig gis mi mi thub

ཇ་ཉེ་འབྲིག་གིས་ཀོ་མི་ཕུག། བཀ་ལོག་ཏུ་གིས་མི་མི་ཏུབ།

A lead awl can't drill leather; words without proof can't convince people.  
(Mkha rgyal thar, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY

drin chen pha ma'i drin lan bsam ma shes bar du mi shes  
sbrang dkar rtsam pa'i ro bcud zas ma tshar bar du mi shes

དྲིན་ཆེན་པ་མའི་དྲིན་ལན་བསམ་མ་ཤེས་བར་དུ་མི་ཤེས། སྤང་དཀར་རྩ་པའི་རོ་བུད་ཟས་མ་ཚར་བར་དུ་མི་ཤེས།

You won't appreciate your parents' loving-kindness until you grow up; you won't appreciate the taste of *rtsam pa* until you run out of food.

(Mkha rgyal thar, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-ONE

gangs dkar sems na rta med na, phu rung nang la srab mi 'dzin

གངས་དཀར་སེམས་ན་རྟ་མེད་ན། ཕུ་རུང་ནང་ལ་སྤེལ་མི་འཛིན།

If I don't have a horse in mind, I won't prepare a bridle. (Very sure about something; no need for a bridle if there is no horse.)

(Kun thar rgyal, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-TWO

bos na ming can, bgos na skal can

བོས་ན་མིང་ཅན། བཀོས་ན་སྐལ་ཅན།

If someone calls, there is a good name; if someone divides, there is a good share. (A person with a good reputation and important position).

(Kun thar rgyal, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-THREE

glang chen smyon pa rig na lam mi gzhol, shAkya thub pa rig na mgo mi sgur

གླང་ཆེན་སྟེན་པ་རིག་པ་ལམ་མི་གཞོ། ཤཀ་ཐུབ་པ་རིག་པ་མཐོ་མི་སྐྱར།

One who won't give way to a charging elephant won't nod his head to the Buddha. (Very stubborn and arrogant.)

(Kun thar rgyal, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-FOUR

rnga mong ske ring yang gnam gyi skar ma mi zin

རྩ་མོང་སྐེ་རིང་ལང་གནས་གྱི་སྐར་མ་མི་ཟིན།

A camel can't reach the stars, though its neck is long.

(Gnam lha thar, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-FIVE

bton kha byang, bris lag byang

བརྟན་ཁ་བྱང་། བྲིས་ལག་བྱང་།

Reading trains the mouth; writing trains the hand (read and write more).

(Phag mo lhun grub, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-SIX

ring bo chag sla, dkar po snog sla

རིང་བོ་ཆག་སྒྲ། དཀར་པོ་སྒོག་སྒྲ།

Long things easily break; white things easily get dirty.

(Phag mo lhun grub, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-SEVEN

kha bshad chu yi lbu ba, lag len gser gyi thigs pa

ཀ་བཤད་ཅུ་ཡི་ལུ་བ། ལག་ལེན་གསེར་གྱི་ཐིགས་པ།

Spoken words are froth; action is golden drops. (Action is more valuable than talking.)

(Phag mo g.yang sgron, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-EIGHT

mi la ngo tsha med na khyi, khyi la rnga ma med na 'dre

མི་ལ་ངོ་མཚེད་ན་མྱི། མྱི་ལ་རྒྱ་མ་མེད་ན་འདྲེ།

People without shame are dogs; dogs without tails are devils.

(Bla ma tshe ring, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB THIRTY-NINE

Itog mi dgos bro kha rum na yod, skrag mi dgos a pha rtsib na yod

ཇོ་ཏོག་མི་དགོས་བོ་ཁ་རུ་མ་ན་ཡོད། སྐྱལ་མི་དགོས་ཨ་པ་རུ་མ་ན་ཡོད།

Don't fear hunger when food is in your robe pouch; fear nothing when Father is near.

(Bla ma tshe ring, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY

rgyobs zer na a pha'i mgo, rgyug zer na gshin rje'i 'phrang

རྒྱལ་བའི་མེད་ན་ཨ་པའི་མགོ། རྒྱལ་བའི་མེད་ན་གཤིན་རྗེའི་འཕྲང་།

He would beat his father's head if ordered; he would run to Hell if ordered. (Very obedient and loyal.)

(Bla ma tshe ring, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-ONE

mdzub mo lnga bo spun yin, lag pa'i phyi nang sha yin

མཚུབ་མོ་ལྷ་བོ་སྒྲུན་ཡིན། ལག་པའི་ཕྱི་ནང་ཤ་ཡིན།

The five fingers are brothers; the hands' two sides are flesh. (Very close, intimate, and united.)

(Lha mo sgrol dkar, Jo ser Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-TWO

spyang kis sha za, rkun mas mna' za

སྤྱང་ཀིས་ཤ་ཟ་རུ་རུ་མས་མན་མ་ཟ་

Wolves eat meat; thieves swallow oaths.

(Lha mo sgrol dkar, Jo ser Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-THREE

pho lo bco lngar bud nab lo phar ma 'dri, bro mar ma slong

ཕོ་ལོ་བཅོ་ལྷན་བུད་ནཱ་བཟུ་ལོ་ཕམ་མ་དྲི་བློ་མཐུ་མ་སྤོང་

When you turn fifteen, don't ask for advice from your father and food from your mother. (You need to be independent.)

(Mgon skyabs, Chos tsha Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-FOUR

skad cha mang na nyog 'gro, skud pa ring na chad 'gro

སྐད་ཅམ་ན་ཉེ་ལོ་སྤྱད་པ་རིང་ན་ཆད་ལོ་

Much talking confuses; long threads break.

(Rin chen skyid, Ru sngun zhol ma Village, Mgo mang Town. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-FIVE

chu ma yong gong gi rag, dgra ma yong gong gi dogs

ཆུ་མ་ཡོང་གོང་གི་རག་དང་འདྲམ་མ་ཡོང་གོང་གི་དོགས་

Build bulwarks before floods come; build defenses before enemies attack.

(Rin chen thar ba, Rta ra Village, recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-SIX

bu re ba can la re bzhag, gos ri mo can la rgyang lta

བུ་རེ་བ་ཅན་ལ་རེ་བཞག་གོས་རིམ་ཅན་ལ་རྒྱང་ལྷོ་

Trust the boy who is hopeful; appreciate the colorful garment from afar.

(Rdo rje skyid, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-SEVEN

mkhas pa 'phyug na 'dom gang, blun po 'phyug na sor gang

མཁས་པ་འཕྱུག་ན་འདོམ་གང་སྤྱོད་པ་འཕྱུག་ན་སོར་གང་

When an expert makes a mistake, it is usually from one armspan away; when a fool makes a mistake, it is usually from the width of a finger away.

(Rdo rje skyid, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-EIGHT

brgya bshad tshig gi rtsa ba, stong srub 'o ma'i mar lo

བརྒྱ་བཤད་ཆིག་གི་རྩ་བ། སྟོང་སྒུབ་འོ་མའི་མར་ལོ།

Summary of a hundred words; butter of milk churned a thousand times. (All in all.)

(Rdo rje skyid, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FORTY-NINE

bos na a, bcol nay a

བོས་ན་ཨ། བཅོལ་ན་ཡ།

Say *ah* when someone calls you; say *yes* when asked for help.

(Sgrol ma rgyal, Chos tsha Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY

snga dro rta pho chos kyis gsos na, phyi dro drin lan rmig pas 'jal ba

སྤྱི་རྩ་རྟ་ཕོ་ཆོས་ཀྱིས་གསོས་ན། ཕྱི་རྩ་དྲིན་ལན་རྟིག་པས་འཇལ་བ།

A horse fed in the morning kicks in the afternoon in return.

(Sgrol ma rgyal, Chos tsha Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-ONE

byu ru dmar mo tog tshang gi yin, rma bya sngon mo sgro tshang gi yin

བྱུ་རུ་དམར་མོ་དྲོག་ཆང་གི་ཡིན། རྟ་བྱ་སྤྱིན་མོ་སྤྱོ་ཆང་གི་ཡིན།

I am from the family ornamented with red coral; the family adorned with blue peacock feathers.

(Sonam gyal, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, September 2016.)

[Note: During the Qing Dynasty, officials might have worn hats decorated with coral or peacock feather decorations indicating their rank.]

## PROVERB FIFTY-TWO

rang skyon rang gis shes na sangs rgyas zer

རང་སྤྱོད་རང་གིས་ཤེས་ན་སངས་རྒྱས་ཟེར།

One who knows his shortcomings is a Buddha.

(Sang rdo, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-THREE

mi skyon bshad dgos, shing skyon gzhog dgos

མི་སྤྱོད་བཤད་དགོས། ཤིང་སྤྱོད་གཞོག་དགོས།

People must be told their faults; gnarls must be removed from trees.

(Sang rdo, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-FOUR

khyed tshang gi sgo kha nas bud de go kha ru btsog don

ཁྱེད་ཚང་གི་སྒོ་ཀ་ནས་བུད་དེ་གོ་ཀ་རུ་བཙོག་དོན།

The reason I entered your doorway and sit near your stove is... (truly speaking...)

(Snying dpal tshe ring, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-FIVE

sems pa dkar bo dung, gzhung rgyud drang mo mda'

སེམས་པ་དཀར་བོ་དུང་། གཞུང་རྒྱུད་ངང་མོ་མདའ།

The kind heart resembles a white conch; the straight heart resembles an arrow.

(Snying dpal tshe ring, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-SIX

grogs pos dgod bzhin bslu, khram pas ngu bzhin bslu

གྲོགས་པོས་དགོང་བཞིན་བསྐྱུ། ཁྲམ་པས་ངུ་བཞིན་བསྐྱུ།

Friends cheat you while smiling; swindlers cheat you while weeping.

(Tshe thar skyid, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-SEVEN

thang nag gi mdud pa grol dgos, dkar nag gi dbye ba 'byed dgos

ཐང་ནག་གི་མདུད་པ་གྲོལ་དགོས། དཀར་ནག་གི་དབྱེ་བ་འབྱེད་དགོས།

Need to know directions to different places; need to distinguish between black and white. (Need to know geography, and distinguish right from wrong.)

(Tshe ring rgyal mtsho, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-EIGHT

rta gom pa can la lcag gcig, mi go ba can la tshig gcig

རྟ་གོམ་པ་ཙན་ལ་ལྷག་གཅིག་མི་གོ་བ་ཙན་ལ་ཆོག་གཅིག་

A good horse only needs a lash; an intelligent person only needs one word.

(Tshe ring rgyal mtsho, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB FIFTY-NINE

mi la yon tan dgos, sning la lo ma dgos

མི་ལ་ཡོན་ཏན་དགོས། སྒོང་ལ་ལོ་མ་དགོས།

A person needs knowledge; a tree needs leaves.

(Tshe ring sgrol ma, Jo ser Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

(Tshe ring rgyal mtsho, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)



## PROVERB SIXTY

mi shes na gzhan la dris, mi rig na sgang la bud

མི་ཤེས་ན་གཞན་ལ་དྲིས། མི་རིག་ན་སྐང་ལ་བུད།

Ask others if you don't understand; climb mountains if you can't see.

(Tshe ring rgyal mtsho, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB SIXTY-ONE

rta shor na 'dzin thabs yod, tshig shor na 'dzin thabs med

རྟ་ཤོར་ན་འཛིན་ཐབས་ཡོད། ཚིག་ཤོར་ན་འཛིན་ཐབས་མེད།

You can get a horse back after untying it; words blurted from your mouth cannot be unspoken.

(Tshe ring sgrol ma, Jo ser Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## PROVERB SIXTY-TWO

mi kha ma blangs na mi rjes mi chod

མི་ཁ་མ་བླངས་ན་མི་རྟེས་མི་ཚོད།

You can't catch up with others when you do not listen to advice.

(Tshe ring sgrol ma, Jo ser Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLES རེད།

Children play riddle games, taking turns. One child asks a riddle and the others need to provide an answer. If a child answers correctly, they get a *ru* 'imaginary household', the more correct answers, the more households they have. If they cannot answer, they must give a *ru* to the one who asked.

## RIDDLE ONE

lgang li phyi ljang ljang nang dmar dmar can (chu kub bam nub sil)

ལྷང་ལི་ཕྱི་ལྷང་ལྷང་ནང་དམར་དམར་ཅན། རྩ་ཀླབ་བམ་རྩལ་སིལ།

A ball that is green on the outside and red inside. (Watermelon.)

(Gnam thar rgyal, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in the former's home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE TWO

mig yas med pa'i chu 'thung ma (thon bu)

མིག་ཡས་མེད་པའི་ཚུ་འཇུང་མ། རྩོན་བུ།

A one-eyed creature that drinks water. (Ladle.)

(Gdugs dkar tshe ring, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE THREE

'gram yas med pa'i rtsa zan ma (zo ra)

འགྲམ་ཡས་མེད་པའི་རྩ་མཚན་མ། རྩོན་པ།

A one-jawed creature that eats grass. (Sickle.)

(Phyug mtsho skyid, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE FOUR

lcags gi ra ma sngo rul ma

lhung la yod kyang lhung rgyu med (zwa nang gi lde mig)

ལུགས་གི་ར་མ་སྒོ་རུ་མ་ ལུང་ལ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་ལུང་རྒྱུ་མེད། ཟླ་ནང་གི་ལྷེ་མིག་

A metal goat that nearly drops out but never falls out. (A key in a lock.)

(Dka' thub tshe ring told the same riddle in his home in Smar khams Village, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE FIVE

g.yag brgya thag pa gcig gis btags (phreng ba)

གཡག་བརྒྱ་ཐག་པ་གཅིག་གིས་བརྟགས། བྲེང་བ།

One hundred yaks tied to a tether. (Prayer beads.)

(Lcags 'tsho sgrol ma, Smar khams Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE SIX

thang dkar dkar, lug nag nag, lug rdzi glu ba (dpe cha klog pa)

ཐང་དཀར་དཀར། ལུག་ནག་ནག། ལུག་རྩི་གུ་བ། དཔེ་ཆ་ལྷོག་པ།

On the white pasture, the sheep are black; the herdsman sings. (Reading books.)

(Kun thar yag, Tsha nag Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE SEVEN

sug bzhi yod kyang 'gro mi shes (cog tse)

སུག་བཞི་ཡོད་ཀྱང་རྒྱ་མི་ཤེས། ཅོག་ཅི།

Has four legs but can't move. (Desk.)

(Rin chen 'tsho, Tsha nag Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE EIGHT

khang dmar nang gi glang dmar (lce)

ཁང་དམར་ནང་གི་གླང་དམར། ལྷེ།

The red bull in the red house? (Tongue.)

(Phag mo g.yang sgron, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE NINE

a khu tshang gi khal shul na, g.yag rgan nag po zhig lhag nas bsdad yod (thab ka)

ཨ་ཁུ་ཚང་གི་ཁལ་ཤུ་ན། གཡག་རྒན་ནག་པོ་ཞིག་ལྷག་ནས་བསྡད་ཡོད། ཐབ་ཀ།

After Uncle's family moves away, a black yak remains behind. (A stove.)

(Rig 'dzin tshe ring, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE TEN

rdo thog shing skyes (lag skor)

རོ་ཐོག་ཤིང་སྒྲིལ། ལག་སྒོར།

A short tree growing on a stone. (Hand mill.)

(Riddles ten and eleven were both told by Bsod nams rgyal, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE ELEVEN

rwa yod kyang brdung mi shes, rkub yod kyang btsog mi shes, (phye ma leb)

རལ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་བརྟུང་མི་ཤེས། རཀུབ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་བཅོག་མི་ཤེས། ཕྱེ་མ་ལེབ།

Has horns but can't gore people; has a bottom but can't sit. (Butterfly.)

(Gu ru rdo rje, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE TWELVE

'bri gcig thag pa mang bos btags (sbra)

འབྲི་གཅིག་ཐག་པ་མང་བོས་བཏགས། སྤྲ།

A female yak tied by many ropes. (Tent.)

(Bsod nams rgyal, Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## RIDDLE THIRTEEN

'brong rgod po lcags kyi sna thug can, sna thu gu 'then na je mgyogs red ('phrul rta)

འབྲོང་རྟོག་པོ་ལཱ་གས་ཀྱི་སྐ་ཐུག་ཅན། སྐ་ཐུག་འཛིན་ན་ཇི་མཁྱེན་པ་རེད། འཕྲུལ་རྩ།

A wild yak with an iron nose ring; the more you twist its ear, the faster it runs. (Motorcycle.)

(Mkha' 'gro tshe ring, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE FOURTEEN

tshang ma'i rgyu ma khog na yod, nged spun gnyis kyi rgyu ma phyi na yod (lham thug)

ཆང་མའི་རྒྱུ་མ་ཁོག་ན་ཡོད། རེད་སྤུན་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུ་མ་ཕྱི་ན་ཡོད། ལྷ་མ་ཐུག།

Others' intestines are inside; my brother's and mine are outside. (Shoelaces.)

(Mkha' 'gro tshe ring, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE FIFTEEN

dmar bo byu ru'i thod pa can, dkar bo dung gi khog pa can

sngon po g.yu yi ral ba can, ltas ngan tsi gu'i rnga ma can (la phug)

དམར་བོ་བྱུ་རུའི་ཐོད་པ་ཅན། དཀར་བོ་དུང་གི་ཁོག་པ་ཅན།

ཕྱོན་པོ་གཡུ་ཡི་རལ་བ་ཅན། ལྷ་ས་དན་ཅི་གུའི་རྩ་མ་ཅན། ལ་ཕུག།

It has a red forehead like coral, white gut like a conch, blue braids like turquoise, and a tail like a mischievous mouse. (Radish.)

(Phag mo lhun grub, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE SIXTEEN

lung mdo'i a ye kher 'dug ma (ja dem)

ལུང་མདོའི་ཨ་ཡེ་ཀེར་འདུག་མ། ཇ་དེམ།

An old woman living alone at the end of a valley. (Kettle.)

(Lha mgo rgyal, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE SEVENTEEN

'gro mi shes ma mo sug bzhi ma (cog tse)

འགོ་མི་ཤེས་མ་མོ་སུག་བཞི་མ། ཅོག་ཅེ།

A sheep with four legs but can't walk. (Desk.)

(Rin chen thar ba, Rta ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE EIGHTEEN

bzung na spar mo gang, btang na khang ba gang (mar me)

བཟུང་ན་སྤར་མོ་གང་། བཏང་ན་ཁང་བ་གང་། མར་མེ།

Hold it, and it fills your hand; let it go, and it fills the room. (Butter lamp.)

(Gnam mtsho yag, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE NINETEEN

mdzo mo ngur nas pha gar bud thal, sna thug chad nas tshur kar thon thal ('ur cha 'phangs pa)

མདོ་མོ་ངུར་ནས་པ་གེར་བུད་ཐལ། སྤ་ཐུག་ཅམ་ནས་ཐུར་ཀར་ཐོན་ཐལ། ལུར་ཆ་འཕངས་པ།

The *mdzo mo*<sup>1</sup> left snorting; the nose-ring rope returned. (Threw a stone with a slingshot.)

(Lcags mo tshe ring, Chos tsha Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

<sup>1</sup> A *mdzo mo* is the female offspring of a yak and a cow

## RIDDLE TWENTY

gor gor nang gi ril ril bo  
 mi lnga yong nas bkyags nas bud thal  
 sum cu dmag gis bsad nas bud thal  
 phra mo nyag ga brgyud nas bud thal  
 bde ba can la 'phur nas bud thal  
 (rtsam pa brdzis nas zas pa)

གོར་གོར་ནང་གི་རིལ་རིལ་བོ།  
 མི་ལྷ་ཡོང་ནས་བཀྲ་གས་ནས་བུད་ཐལ།  
 སུམ་ཅུ་དམག་གིས་བསང་ནས་བུད་ཐལ།  
 ཕ་མོ་ཉལ་ག་བརྟུད་ནས་བུད་ཐལ།  
 བདེ་བ་ཅན་ལ་འཕྱར་ནས་བུད་ཐལ། ཅུ་མ་པ་བརྗེས་ནས་ཟས་པ།

A ball-shaped thing in a round one, five people came and lifted it. Thirty<sup>1</sup> soldiers killed it, then went along a narrow mountain pass. And finally flew to the blissful land. (Making and eating *rtsam pa*.) (Klu mo, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## RIDDLE TWENTY-One

ri rab rgyal bo'i gangs gseng du  
 dung gi bu mo spun bzhi yod  
 phyogs skyong rgyal bo'i bka' drin la  
 bdud rtsi bsil ma'i char zhig babs ('o ma bzho ba)

རི་རབ་རྒྱལ་བོའི་གངས་གསེང་དུ།  
 དུང་གི་བུ་མོ་སྤུན་བཞི་ཡོད།  
 ཕྱོགས་སྟོང་རྒྱལ་བོའི་བཀའ་དྲིན་ལ།  
 བདུད་རྩི་བསིལ་མའི་ཆར་ཞིག་བབས། འོ་མ་བཞོ་བ།

There are four conch sisters on Mount Meru, thanks to the grace of the king guarding the directions, the rain of amrita descends. (Milking a cow.) (Kun thar rgyal, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

<sup>1</sup> "Thirty" alludes to teeth.

## NARRATIVES

In Mgo mang, children often sleep with their grandparents or with their parents if they have no grandparents.

In the past, with no or few radios and other audio entertainment devices, the grandparents and parents told stories to children. In my case, the stories resumed in my dreams after I fell asleep.

In earlier times, relatives returned to their natal homes in agricultural areas to help harvest. If a house could not accommodate all the people, the children might have slept outside on beds under eaves and shared stories they had heard from their parents, grandparents, and others in their homeplaces. The stories might have had different details, and the children might have argued that their own stories were true and real. Moreover, when the children gathered during the New Year holidays while visiting their grandparents, cousins typically slept together and told stories.

I present the narratives that I recorded from respondents in the study area.

### NARRATIVE One: AN OLD COUPLE WITH COWS

An old couple had twelve cows. The old man slaughtered them one by one. They ate them until only one cow left.

One day, before the old woman went to fetch water, she asked her husband not to kill their last cow because they needed its milk. Before the old woman left to fetch water, her husband stuck a needle into the water container made of animal gut. When the old woman was ready to return home, she noticed that the container was leaking, so she filled the small holes with strands of her hair.

Meanwhile, her husband slaughtered the cow, removed the cow's teeth, threw the udder into the ash, and ate all the meat before his wife returned home.

When the woman returned and realized that her husband had slaughtered the cow, she cried and took the udder into a cave. When she put the udder on a stone, milk flowed out from the teats. She lived there until one day, she worried that her husband might be dying from starvation. When she got near her home, she saw her husband putting ash on a cow horn on a table, muttering, "This is your breakfast, my dear wife."

Taking pity, she put a bucket of yogurt at the door and left. Her husband followed her, tracking her footprints in the snow, and found her in the cave where the old woman treated him with plenty of dairy products.

Later, when she went to collect yak dung, her husband boiled the udder and ate it. Realizing what he had done she was very upset and fled to a distant place where she noticed a tent. She entered the tent and found bowls filled with rice. She ate some, and then a rabbit, tiger, wolf, and fox returned from hunting. The tiger swallowed the old woman instantly.

The rabbit said, "Uncle, she could have been our cook if you had not eaten her."

The tiger said, "I didn't chew, I just swallowed her," and vomited the old woman from out of his stomach.

The old woman then cooked for the animals. However, after some time, her husband again found her. She offered him much meat and dug a hole nearby. She told him to hide inside and not to make a sound. When the animals returned, the tiger leader divided the meat they had got while hunting and then asked, "Who didn't get his share?"

The old man answered without thinking, "I didn't."

The tiger stretched his claws into the hole where the old man was hiding, pulled him out, and devoured him.

(Mgon po rdo rje, Smar khams Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## NARRATIVE TWO: MOTHER RABBIT AND MOTHER BEAR

A bear mother and a rabbit mother were neighbors. Each lived with a child.

One day, Mother Rabbit and Mother Bear went to dig wild yams in the mountains. Mother Rabbit dug wild yams diligently and put them in her bag. Mother Bear didn't. Instead, she ate them one by one after she dug them up. In the late afternoon, she saw Mother Rabbit's bag was full while hers was empty. Mother Bear then killed Mother Rabbit and brought her bag of wild yams and her carcass back home.

Baby Rabbit approached Mother Bear and asked, "Aunt Bear, where is my mother?"

"She's coming home with yams as big as a horse," lied Mother Bear.

So Baby Rabbit went home and waited hopefully until the next day, but Mother Rabbit still had not returned. He then decided to consult Uncle Crow, who told him Mother Bear had killed his mother.

Baby Rabbit then secretly went near the bears' home and overheard Mother Bear saying, "This is Mother Rabbit's head, and this is Mother Rabbit's leg."

Baby Rabbit returned home and cried.

Before Mother Bear went to dig wild yams the next day, she said to her son, "Don't play with Baby Rabbit if he asks you to play with spears and knives," and her son agreed.

After Mother Bear was gone, Baby Rabbit went to Baby Bear and invited him to play with spears and knives. Baby Bears replied, "Mother said I couldn't play any games with spears and knives today."

Baby Rabbit then suggested, "Let's play with the millstone."

After Baby Bear agreed, Baby Rabbit turned the millstone by pulling the pole attached to the millstone at the front while Baby Bear pushed the pole from behind. Baby Rabbit suddenly pulled the pole very strongly and hopped away. Meanwhile, the pole hit and killed Baby Bear.

(Tshe mdo skyid, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

## NARRATIVE THREE: DEITY MAKER KUN DGA' AND CARPENTER KUN DGA'

Long ago, two men were named Kun dga'. One was a deity-maker, and the other was a carpenter.

Deity-maker Kun dga' envied Carpenter Kun dga'.

One day, Deity-maker Kun dga' made up a letter and took it to the king. The letter said the King of Heaven ordered Carpenter Kun dga' to come to Heaven by stacking wood in front of a cliff, setting it on fire, and riding a smoke horse to Heaven. When Carpenter Kun dga' learned this, he dug a hole near the cliff where he would soon be burned and stored water and food for a week.

The next day, when everybody was beating drums loudly while the fire burned fiercely, he hid in the hole near where the fire was. Later, a man reported he had seen Carpenter Kun dga' riding a smoke horse to Heaven.

Carpenter Kun dga' hid in the hole for more than half a week. One day he also wrote a letter, went to the king, and said, "I have returned from my visit to Heaven. The deities asked me to send Deity-maker Kun dga' to Heaven."

People then stacked wood in front of the cliff and burned Deity-maker Kun dga' atop the fire. Unable to ride the smoke to Heaven, he died.

(Mkha' 'gro tshe ring, Sha rgya Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE FOUR: A LIAR

One day a monk visited a liar and asked him to lie. The liar wept while holding the monk and said, "How can I lie since one of my family members died yesterday? Please come to my home and chant tomorrow."

"Sure, your request is reasonable," the monk agreed.

The next day, the monk brought some other monks to Liar's home and saw him sitting in the sunshine, sipping tea. The monk asked, "Why are you happy sitting in the sun since one of your family members has passed away?"

Liar responded, "You asked me to tell a lie, which is what I did."

The monk had nothing to say and left.

(Brug 'bum skyid, Smar khams Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE FIVE: AN OLD COUPLE ABANDONED THEIR CHILDREN

A couple with two children were so poor that they had only five sheep and two goats. For each meal, they had a half-bowl of milk and a handful of *rtsam pa*. Time passed, and they were starving. The couple then discussed abandoning their children in the forest.

A few days later, the husband took his children to the forest and told them to play until a bell hung from a tree rang. He said he would then come.

The wind made the bell ring, but the children's father never came to take them home, even though they waited for several days. Realizing that their parents had abandoned them, they searched for ways to survive. Luckily, they found a childless rich man and lived with him until he passed away.

After abandoning their children, the parents divided the property. They argued as they were dividing the property and finally separated, becoming beggars after their property was gone.

One day, the husband met the two children, who were now in their twenties. They did not acknowledge their father and gave him nothing. After some days, an old woman beggar came and told them she was their mother. The children eventually took care of their parents, even though they had abandoned them, and then they led a happy life together.

(Bde skyid (b. 2004), Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE SIX: POTATO AND PAPER

A young woman went to live with her husband in his home. Her marriage and life were not what she expected, so she wanted to ask her mother for permission to return home. She wanted to send a letter, but she was illiterate, so she sent a potato to her mother through a man going to her village.

Her clever, illiterate mother understood and sent a blank piece of paper in reply. The girl returned after she received the paper.<sup>1</sup>

(Gnam mthso sgrol ma, Smar khams Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

<sup>1</sup> "Potato" in A mdo Tibetan dialect is *yong ma*, pronounced the same as "come." "Paper" in Tibetan is pronounced *shog gu*, which is similar to "come."



# NARRATIVE SEVEN: RABBIT AND WOLF

Long ago, Rabbit and Wolf were neighbors. Rabbit borrowed a sickle from Wolf when she had to cut grass.

When Rabbit began to borrow the sickle from Wolf more frequently, Wolf wondered why. "What are you doing with the grass you cut?" Wolf asked.

"I'm using it for my bedding," answered Rabbit.

Wolf asked, "Do you make a new bed every day?"

Rabbit replied, "It's very wet under my bed, so I have to renew it frequently."

Wolf did not believe this. One day, after Rabbit borrowed the sickle, he went to Rabbit's home and found a lamb there. He killed it and ate everything, except for the legs and the head.

Rabbit returned that evening. Realizing what Wolf had done, she said the next day, "Uncle Wolf, please come to my home for dinner. I'll boil some meat for you since someone killed my lamb."

Before Wolf reached Rabbit's home, she dug a deep hole near the stove, covered it with a white rug, and made a fire. She then put a black rug next to the white one. When Wolf arrived, she said if he was kind, he should sit on the white rug, and if he was evil, he should sit on the black one. Wolf said, "I want to sit on the white rug because I am kindhearted."

Attempting to sit on the white rug, Wolf plunged into the hole. Distraught, he then begged Rabbit for help. Rabbit said, "Let me put on my robe first, then I'll help you."

Feeling the heat of the fire, Wolf pleaded, "Please help me! I'm in pain!"

Rabbit said, "Let me tie my sash, and then I'll help you."

Wolf moved left and right as the fire continued to burn him. He begged again, "I beg you. Please help me! I can't bear it any longer."

Rabbit replied, "I'll put on my shoes and then help you. You killed my lamb, so please stay there," Rabbit said.

(Klu mo 'tsho, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

# NARRATIVE EIGHT: THE KING AND NINE PRINCESSES

Long ago, a king had nine daughters who each had a husband. The king liked his sons-in-law except for the youngest daughter's husband.

One day he ordered his sons-in-law to catch a garuda, the king of birds, and said the one who caught the garuda would gain half the king's territory. He also gave fine horses, gold bows and arrows, and provisions to the sons-in-law he liked. To the son-in-law he did not like, he offered only a donkey, a wooden bow and arrow, an empty *rtsam pa* bag, and a teapot.

The next day, the sons-in-law set off. After traveling far away, they came to a large frozen river and decided to stay there that night before setting off again the next morning. The eight older men rode horses and had a dog that understood human language. This dog secretly spied on the son-in-law with a donkey and wooden weapons. It listened as the prince said to the donkey, "The eight men should scatter *rtsam pa* and dry cheese on the ice since they have a lot of *rtsam pa* and cheese. The ice is slippery, but they can then walk on the ice barefoot after washing their feet. They'll be able to reach the other side easily."

After the dog reported this to its masters, the men said they had a lot of food, so the next day, the eight men scattered *rtsam pa* and cheese on the ice and walked on the ice after washing their feet. The youngest husband crossed the river with his donkey while collecting the *rtsam pa* and cheese the other eight men had scattered.

The eight men met a passerby who told the eight men that they would reach a place without stones and then a place without water. The eight men worried about how they would cook without using stones for a hearth and sent their dog to spy on the youngest man to hear what his plan was for

the next day. The man and rabbit<sup>1</sup> guessed the dog was listening and said, "The eight men have many knees, so they could cook their meal with their knees, using them as hearthstones."

After the dog reported this to its masters, the eight men used their knees as hearthstones. Later, when they reached the place with no stones, their knees hurt so much that they couldn't cook, but the youngest man cooked with stones he had carried on his donkey.

The eight men sent the dog to eavesdrop again on the youngest man. The dog heard, "The eight men don't need to worry about water because they have eight horses. If they drink horse urine, they won't feel thirsty. Unfortunately, we only have a donkey, so we'll have to bring some blocks of ice."

The dog reported this to its masters, who thought that's what they should do.

The following day, they reached the place without water and planned to drink horse urine. However, the horses produced no urine because they had not drunk any water. Finally, they reached a place with eagles, thought they were garudas, hunted some, and then tiredly but happily returned home.

The youngest man thought hunting garudas was not easy and asked a local man who explained that the garudas were not there but in some mountain caves.

The man did as instructed, reached the caves, caught a garuda, and returned to the king's palace.

After the older eight men returned, they proudly showed the eagles and said they were garudas. The king only saw eagles but noticed that the youngest princess's husband had indeed caught a garuda. The king kept his promise and gave half of his territory to his youngest daughter and her husband, who splendidly spent the rest of their lives.

(Gnam mtsho yag, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE NINE: CLEVER

There was a king called Dran gsal 'Clever' and a poor man who was very intelligent, so everyone also called him Dran gsal.

One day, the king heard this and was very jealous. He said to Poor Clever, "If you are clever, steal my turquoise necklace without my knowledge within three days. If you do that, I'll give you half of my property and territory. But, if you can't, it means you aren't clever and should not be called Clever, so you must die."

The king assigned horse riders around the compound and put another group of men around the palace. Meanwhile, women guarded inside the compound and offered food and drinks to both groups of guards.

The first night, Poor Clever did not go to the palace, and he also did not go on the second night. Everyone then concluded that Poor Clever had fled. On the third night, when everyone was exhausted, having kept careful guard the previous nights, Poor Clever came disguised as a beautiful woman. He had put drugs into the tea, liquor, and food that he offered the soldiers. After the horsemen outside the compound were unconscious, Dran gsal dragged them up on the compound walls.

He also offered the women drinks and food and, after they were unconscious, he tied their braids together.

Finally, he put stones into the sleeves of the palace soldiers' Tibetan robes when they were also unconscious, having consumed the drugged food and drinks.

Poor Clever easily went inside the palace, put an animal stomach near the sleeping king's head, and took his turquoise necklace. Once he had it, he mounted his horse and shouted, "Clever came and stole the turquoise necklace!"

<sup>1</sup> This rabbit is not mentioned earlier.

The king woke up from the shouting and bellowed, "My head! It's gone!"

Meanwhile, the women outside screamed, "My hair is burning!" while jerking each other because of their tied braids.

The soldiers with stones in their sleeves swatted at the fire, beating the women's heads with the stones.

Each horse rider thought he was on his own horse and lashed the horses, eager to chase Clever, but could only ride the wall.

The next day, Poor Clever came to the palace and said, "Dear king, you should give me half of your property and territory because I stole your turquoise necklace."

The enraged king reneged on his promise. Clever then threw the turquoise necklace to the ground, after which the king vomited blood and died because the turquoise was connected to his soul, protecting him like an amulet.

(Brug 'bum skyid, Smar khams Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TEN: DIVINATION

A wife who lived in Tibet ate good food when her husband was absent and served only bread, *rtsam pa*, and tea to her husband.

One day, the husband pretended to go to a distant place but instead hid in their compound and watched his wife. He saw her boiling meat for lunch, eating it, and hiding the leftover meat in a wooden bucket.

Late in the evening, when he pretended to return from his journey, his wife provided only bread and tea as before. When he asked if there was other food to eat, she said there was not.

After having bread and tea, he said he wanted to divine and asked his wife to bring some black and white pebbles. Holding the pebbles, he gestured like a diviner and threw the pebbles one by one into the wooden bucket where his wife had hidden the meat. He then said the pebbles indicated that there was something else to eat. His wife gave him the remaining meat, which he enjoyed eating.

The next day, the wife thought, "Maybe I should put the food into a wooden chest and lock it so that he won't find it!"

She made dumplings after her husband left to drive the livestock to the mountains. However, her husband had returned secretly, and as the day before, hid and watched her. After eating several dumplings, she put the remaining ones into the chest and locked it. Having watched all this, the husband went to the mountains to herd his livestock.

In the evening, when the husband returned home with the livestock, his wife offered him a bowl of *rtsam pa*. He told his wife to bring the pebbles again, threw the pebbles at the chest to divine, and said that the pebbles indicated that they had something to eat.

The wife was now convinced that her husband had divination skills and, thinking he could learn all her secrets, she shared all their food with him.

The wife told locals Lhun 'grub' that her husband was a good diviner. The husband continued to pretend that he could divine. He went to the fields, found a nest of birds, counted the nestlings, and noted how many were males and how many were females. He next told the villagers that he knew how many male and female birds were in the nest. The villagers counted after he reported this and then trusted him.

After dinner one evening, the husband walked down a village path and saw two thieves running away. He caught them and told them to stand up when he said sit down and sit down when he said stand up, otherwise he would report them to the villagers.

The next day, the family who had been robbed asked him to divine and identify the thieves. The village leader called all the young men to the village meeting hall. After they arrived, the diviner

said, "Stand up! The young men sat down. He then said, "Sit down! And the two men stood up. He then told everyone they were the thieves. Since that time, the villagers and his wife completely believed in him.

(Mkha' rgyal thar, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE ELEVEN: ROBBING

A thief named Don grub became a wealthy man after stealing others' property for many years.

One day, Don grub met a man named Zla ba, who understood his history of thieving. Zla ba invited Don grub to his home the next day. Though Zla ba did not want him to come, a Tibetan proverb came to his mind: *Grul ba khyim gyi rgyan, rma bya nags kyi rgyan* 'Guests are a family's ornaments, peacocks ornament a forest'.

The next day, Zla ba's mother was winnowing grain from the chaff when Don grub came.

Don grub asked, "What is your mother doing?"

Zla ba knew Don grub was curious and said, "She is counting my family's many coins."

Zla ba approached his mother, took the only gold coin the family had, gave it to Don grub as a gift, and invited Don grub to come to visit again so they could give him another coin.

Don grub thought in surprise, "I can get a gold coin once, so how many can I get if I come here often?"

After the guest left, Zla ba's mother scolded, "What should we do now that you have given away our only gold coin?"

Zla ba replied confidently, "Rather than losing a sheep, maybe we can get a horse."

That night, Don grub dug a hole in the room's wall where he thought the mother put the coins after counting them during the daytime. He planned to steal the many coins that he imagined were there. Zla ba was waiting inside the room, caught Don grub by the neck as he was crawling inside, and yelled, "Mother, come with a lamp! I caught the thief!"

When they identified the thief as Don grub, who had been their guest, Zla ba said, "I gave you a coin when you came as a guest. Now you are stealing. I'll report this to our village leader."

Don grub begged Zla ba to release him and not tell the leader. Don grub also agreed to give one hundred coins to the man and his mother.

In this way, Zla ba and his mother became rich.

(Tshe ring rgya mtsho, Glo rgya Village, and Mkha' 'gro tshe ring, Sha rgya Village. Recorded in their homes, August 2016. Both told the same story.)

#### NARRATIVE TWELVE: PARENTS ABANDON THEIR DAUGHTERS

One day the poor parents of two daughters said, "If we abandon our children, each of us can enjoy two loaves of bread and two cups of milk every day. We will lead a happy, carefree life."

The next day, the father took his two daughters to a forest and told them to play until he waved his hands and then they would all go home together.

He put a cloth on a tree branch far from his daughters and left. The daughters played for a long time, but their father didn't wave his hands. The younger daughter asked her sister, "Why hasn't father waved his hands?"

The older sister replied, "Father will wave his hands after he finishes cutting some wood."

When they finally noticed the cloth on the tree branch moving, they thought their father was waving his hand, so they walked toward the tree only to sadly realize that their father had abandoned them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following paragraph seems unrelated. It might be from another story or, perhaps, a possible, later episode from this story. It is included here because it is what Spyi 'du tshe ring said.

The elder daughter touched the ground, and edible beans appeared on the surface of the earth. She touched the ground again, and many loaves of bread appeared. They ate until they were full. When she next touched the ground, a house appeared. They entered the house and saw many animals living there. The daughters and the animals became friends and led a wonderful life together. (Spyi 'dul tshe ring, Tsha nag Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE THIRTEEN: AN OBEDIENT DAUGHTER BECOMES THE QUEEN

One day a father with three daughters asked his eldest daughter for food. She said, "If you pick a flower for me, I'll give you food."

He went to his middle daughter, who also asked him to pick a flower before giving him some food. He finally asked his youngest daughter, who gave him food without asking him to do anything.

Next, he went to the mountains to pick a flower for his youngest daughter, but he cut a snake's head in the process. The snake's mother came to him and said, "You cut my son's head, so you must give one of your daughters in marriage to my son."

The father went to his elder daughter with the flower and asked her to marry the snake. She refused, saying, "Why don't you marry me to a man instead of a snake?"

He then approached his middle daughter, who refused, repeating what the eldest daughter had said.

When he asked his youngest daughter, she agreed and went to the snake's home.

One day, a bee flew to the eldest daughter and asked, "Who wants to be the king's queen? If you do, follow me."

In response, the eldest daughter killed the bee with her broom.

The next day, another bee flew to his middle daughter and said, "Please follow me if you want to be the queen."

The middle daughter killed the bee with a rolling pin.

The next day, another bee went to the youngest daughter and said, "If you want to be the queen, please follow me."

She followed the bee to the palace, where the king was waiting for her.

The next day, she became the queen and had a happy life.

(Bka' 'gyur sgrol ma, Brag dkar Village. Recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE FOURTEEN: THE POOR BOY

An old mother and her son lived together. The son hunted birds for a living. One day, he shot a bird that suddenly disappeared. While searching for the bird, he found a pair of excellent quality shoes, though they needed repair. The shoe repairman was very surprised when he saw the shoes because he said, they belonged to the princess who had disappeared some days ago. The repairman told him to take the shoes to the king, who would reward him.

The son did as he was advised. When the king asked him where he had found the shoes, the boy told him everything that had happened. The king then sent a trustworthy servant to go with him to search for the princess.

The next day, they searched for the princess where the boy had found the shoes and discovered a cave. Looking inside, they spied a young woman. They asked her if she was the princess. She said she was. When the two men asked her to go to the palace with them, she explained that she could not go until her shackles were removed. She added that the shackles could only be removed when they killed a fish on a demon's shoulders.

The boy soon found the demon and killed the fish, rescuing the princess. The king's servant took the princess home but abandoned the boy inside the cave by destroying the wooden ladder that led outside. With no way to escape the cave, the boy stayed for a long time. During this time, he found many keys - keys made of gold, silver, copper, and iron. Using the gold key, he opened a gold room where he found a dragon bound in chains. With an ax, he broke the chains, rescuing the dragon, which flew out of the cave with the boy to the dragon's home.

The dragon said, "When my parents ask what you want as a reward for rescuing me, say that you need a dragon horn and gold chopsticks."

When he met the dragon's parents, he asked for a dragon horn and gold chopsticks. The dragon's parents said that they could not give him those things, but they could give him a drum and, when he beat it three times, he could get whatever he requested. He then took the drum and headed back to his own home.

On the way, he became exhausted, so he beat the drum three times, and a horse appeared, which he rode toward his home. When it got dark, he looked for a place to sleep. He approached a house and asked for permission to spend the night there. The master of the house asked if he needed food. He replied that he only needed a place to sleep. The master of the home then saw when he beat the drum, food appeared. After eating, the boy went to bed, and the greedy home master decided to kill the boy and take the drum.

The next day, the man hid under a bridge, waiting for the boy he planned to kill. But when the man attacked, the startled horse reared and killed the man. The horse vanished into the sky after the man was dead.

The boy walked on to his home. When he arrived, he beat his drum three times and asked for clothes and food for his mother, who was very happy with these gifts. The boy then asked his mother to attend the princess' wedding the next day.

The next day, at the wedding, the princess was to marry the servant who, the king believed, had saved the princess.

When the princess saw the boy, she told the king that the boy was her real savior. Having now learned that the servant had cheated him, the king ordered him buried under a hundred soil layers with a tower built on top.

The king then asked the boy to be his son-in-law. The boy thus married the princess and led a very happy life with his mother.

(Lha mo sgrol dkar, Jo ser Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE FIFTEEN: THE GOAT-TAIL MOUSE

Long ago, a couple who often quarreled herded goats. One day, they decided to separate and divide the goats. They agreed that they would drive the goats to a river where one of the couple would stand on one side of the river and the other on the opposite side. After the goats had their fill of water, those that went to the man would belong to him, and those that went to the woman would be hers.

After the goats had drunk the water, they all headed towards the man. The woman screamed, "Oh my!" and grabbed the last goat's tail, which broke off in her hand. That was all she got.

Later, she ate *rtsam pa* mixed with blood from the tail. Afterward, when she was getting ready to boil the tail and eat it, the goat tail became a small boy who pleaded with her not to kill him. He said that he could help her if she didn't kill him. Afterward, the tiny boy stole property from others and was called Goat-tail Mouse because mice are thieves.

Sometime later, the king's minister reported that property in the treasury was steadily diminishing. The king declared, "I know who is stealing from me," and ordered his subordinate to summon Goat-tail Mouse.

When Goat-tail Mouse arrived, the king said, "If you can steal the *mdzo*<sup>1</sup> in my yard, I will give you half of my property. If you cannot, you must promise to stop stealing."

That night Goat-tail Mouse asked two of his thief-friends to help, promising to give them all the meat of the *mdzo* except for the head and legs. After they successfully stole the king's *mdzo*, Goat-tail Mouse went to the king, showed him the *mdzo*'s head and legs, and asked for his reward. The king refused and said, "If you can steal my drinking cup, I will acknowledge that you are a good thief."

Goat-tail Mouse made a hole in the palace roof, lowered a bamboo pole with a hook attached, and pulled up the drinking cup. He went to the king, showed him the drinking cup, and again asked for his reward.

The king again refused but added, "If you can steal my trousers, I will reward you."

Goat-tail Mouse later secretly went to the palace, put a piece of wet yak dung on the king's trousers, and told everyone that the king had defecated in his pants. Embarrassed, the king thought everyone would believe this, so he threw the trousers away. Goat-tail Mouse then took the pair of trousers to the king and asked for his reward for the third time.

The king yet again refused but said, "If you can steal my turquoise, I will give you the reward."

The king tied a lion and tiger at the palace gate to guard the turquoise and put mounted guards around the palace compound.

Goat-tail Mouse disguised himself as a beautiful lady and went around offering liquor to the soldiers. Once they were drunk, he put the soldiers from the first floor onto the second floor and put the horse saddles on the walls. Next, he put the soldiers from the second floor in the saddles. Unexpectedly, after drugging them, the lion and tiger became friendly towards him. He unleashed them, replacing them with two big pots. Goat-tail Mouse then put a stone in one of a male servant's sleeves. After successfully stealing the king's turquoise from a drawer in the king's bedroom, he put a needle where the turquoise had been.

He next went outside and yelled, "The king's turquoise has been stolen!"

The king stretched out his arms, groping about for the turquoise with his hands while shouting, "Where is my turquoise?"

The needle pricked him, so he asked his servants to make a fire. A female servant burned her hair because she was so nervous as she tried to make a fire. The king ordered another servant to put out the fire. The servant flapped one of his sleeves to extinguish the fire and accidentally killed the female servant because of the stone in one of his sleeves.

On the second floor, the soldier heard the king yelling, thought he was on the first floor, and, when he stepped outside, he fell from the building. The soldiers on the wall thought they were riding horses, lashed the wall, and tried to go, but their "horse" did not move. The king angrily went out to see why the lion and the tiger were not attacking and found only two pots in their place.

The next day, Goat-tail Mouse came, and the king finally gave him half of his property as promised in the beginning. From then on, Goat-tail Mouse stopped stealing.

(Rdo rje don grub, Smar khams Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

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<sup>1</sup> A *mdzo* is the male offspring of a yak and a cow.

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NARRATIVE SIXTEEN: A MAN BECOMES RICH

A poor man had nothing to put in his belly long ago, so he went to his brother's home to borrow some barley. He wanted to grow barley to make a living and promised to return the barley in autumn after harvest. His sister-in-law was a very bad woman who did not want to help him, so she boiled some barley and gave it to him.

After returning home, he planted the barley and waited for it to sprout, but a huge tree with fruit grew. Everyone admired this tree and its fruit. One day, he found that the tree had been uprooted and stolen. He followed the thief's footprints to a cave and found a demon and her child living there. He overheard the child asking his mother to tell stories. She told him to stir the fire first.

After the boy stirred the fire, he went to his mother, who told him there was a magic stone in their house, and gold would pour out of it if they turned the stone. She emphasized that they needed to take care of the stone.

Once the man heard all this, he stole the stone and became very rich. One day, his brother visited and asked how he had become so rich. The poor man told everything, so the greedy brother went to the cave. This time, the demon sensed someone was there and asked her son to put out the fire. The brother suddenly stumbled, which the demons heard. The demons thus caught him.

(Gang dkar lha mo, Chos tsha Village. Recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

## NARRATIVE SEVENTEEN: THE GREEDY MAN AND THE LIAR

A greedy man and a liar were friends. One day, Liar put the only gold coin that he and his mother had in donkey dung. He said to his mother, "When Greedy comes, please take out this gold coin from the dung."

Greedy soon came, and Liar's mother took the gold coin from the dung. Greedy was surprised and asked why a gold coin was in the dung. Liar said, "Our donkey defecates gold if we treat him well and give him a lot of good grass and water."

Greedy then asked if he could borrow the donkey and promised to take good care of it. Greedy treated the donkey very well for almost a week, but nothing happened, so he went to Liar's home, but Liar was not there. Enraged, he killed Liar's mother.

When Liar returned, he found his mother was dead and learned who had killed her. He next placed his mother's corpse in a village lane sitting against a rock. He put beans in front of the corpse and shouted, "Come buy beans! Come buy beans!"

A man came, and seeing that his mother was dead, he reminded Liar that his mother was dead. When the man touched the corpse, it fell over. Liar then shouted, "You killed my mother!" and demanded a large amount of money as compensation.

When Liar got home, Greedy soon noticed that he now had a lot of money. Greedy asked, "How did you get this money?"

Liar said, "After you killed my mother, I sold her corpse in the village lane to a man. So I'm rich now."

Greedy also wanted to be rich and asked Liar to kill his mother. After Liar killed Greedy's mother, Greedy took her corpse to a village lane to sell. Everyone scolded and beat him and told him that nobody wanted to buy a corpse.

Greedy was so angry that he set Liar's house on fire.

Liar put some ash in a bag and went to a foolish man's home to secretly exchange his bag of ash for the man's bag of money.

When Liar came home with the bag of money, Greedy asked, "How did you get this money?"

Liar answered, "After you burned my house, I sold the ash."



Greedy believed this and asked Liar to burn down his house. Later, when Greedy was trying to sell the ash, everyone told him that nobody buys ash and beat him.

Greedy then went to Liar and asked, "Why do you lie to me?" and tied Liar to a tree on a small island in the middle of a lake. He said that he would throw him into the lake the next day after returning from a relative's wedding.

After Greedy left, Liar saw a one-eyed monk riding a donkey, driving some goats. He said to the monk, "Are you blind in one eye?"

"Yes," the monk replied.

Liar said, "I was blind until I hung from this tree, and then my eyes were cured."

The monk believed this, untied Liar, and asked Liar to hang him from the tree.

The next day, Greedy came and threw the monk into the lake.

Greedy saw Liar driving a herd of goats a week later and asked, "Why are you here?"

Liar answered, "I got these goats from the lake. You didn't throw me in the exact center of the lake, so I only have a few goats. If you had thrown me in the center, I would have more."

Greedy believed this and told Liar to throw him in the center of the lake.

Liar then threw Greedy into the center of the lake and happily walked away.

(Kun bzang skyid, Rdo ra Village. Recorded at MTNBS, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE EIGHTEEN: UNCLE STON PA ASKS FOR HIS GOLD

Uncle Ston pa needed to go somewhere and asked his neighbor to take care of a bag of gold while he was gone.

After Uncle Ston pa returned from his journey, he asked his neighbor to return his gold. The neighbor gave him a bag of sand. Uncle Ston pa opened it and asked, "How did my gold become sand?"

The neighbor answered, "You are unlucky, so your gold became sand."

Uncle Ston pa said nothing, understanding his neighbor had cheated him. Uncle Ston pa then waited a long time until his neighbor got ready to go to a distant place and entrusted his three children to Uncle Ston pa.

While the neighbor was away, Uncle Ston pa brought three monkeys from the mountains, trained them, and gave them the children's names.

When the neighbor returned, Uncle Ston pa called the three children. The three monkeys presented themselves, so he gave them to his neighbor. The frightened neighbor asked, "How did my children become monkeys?"

Uncle Ston pa answered, "You are very unlucky, so your children became monkeys."

The neighbor then asked Uncle Ston pa how the monkeys could change back into his children. Uncle Ston pa said there was no way.

The neighbor was distraught, confessed that he had stolen Uncle Ston pa's gold, and returned the gold.

Uncle Ston pa then returned the children he had hidden.

(Chos mtsho, Sha rgya Village, recorded at MCSNMS, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE NINETEEN: A SHEEP GOES ON PILGRIMAGE TO LHASA

Wanting to make a pilgrimage to Lha sa, Sheep prepared and started. She walked and walked until one day, Wolf saw her and asked, "Hello! Dear Sister, where are you going?"

"I am going to Lhasa to worship," Sheep answered fearfully.

Wolf said menacingly, "I can eat you now."

"Uncle Wolf, please don't eat me! I have dreamed a thousand times of going to Lhasa to worship," begged Sheep.

"I see. You really want to go to Lhasa. OK, I won't eat you today, but please remember when you return home on this road that I will be waiting for you, and then I will eat you."

Sheep agreed and continued her journey. She was despondent as she thought about her bleak future. After a half month, she reached Lha sa, visited many temples, and saw many Buddhist images. She was delighted, worshipped the deities, and prayed for her next life, wanting to become more compassionate.

However, when she recalled that Wolf was waiting for her, she felt sad. After finishing her worship, she started her long return trip home, walking and crying sadly. On the way, she met a smart rabbit, who asked, "A ma 'Mother' Sheep, why are you crying so sadly?"

"Wolf is waiting to eat me as I return home," Sheep said.

Rabbit said, "Don't be sad. I'll think of a way to defeat him."

"You can't, but thank you for your kind heart. Wolf will eat me," Sheep said.

"I'll use grass to make something that looks like a gun. I'll carry it on my back and frighten him," Rabbit said.

They discussed everything and traveled together. When they neared Wolf's cave, Rabbit hopped up a nearby mountain.

Sheep walked to the cave. Wolf jumped out, declaring, "Now, I will eat you!"

Rabbit shouted, "Mother Sheep, what is that next to you?"

Sheep asked, "Who are you?"

"I'm a soldier of the king. I have a gun, and I am hunting for a big animal. What is that next to you?" Rabbit demanded.

Wolf fearfully whispered to Sheep, "Please tell the soldier I'm your bag."

Rabbit said, "I can't see it clearly because I'm so far from you. Take a tree branch and hit it. Then I'll know what it is."

Sheep picked up a tree branch.

"Please hit me lightly," Wolf said.

Sheep hit the wolf lightly.

Rabbit said, "I can't hear any knocking sound. I'm still not sure what it is."

Wolf whispered, "Hit me hard."

Sheep hit Wolf's head with the branch as hard as she could and killed him.

Sheep thanked the smart rabbit, and together they walked and happily sang their way to Sheep's home.

(Rin chen rdo rje, Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY: THE LION AND RABBIT

Lion and Rabbit lived in a big forest. Lion was lazy, proud, and arrogant. Rabbit disliked him, came up with a great idea, and said to Lion, "Dear King, although I obey and serve you, someone stronger than you but with the same appearance has come. He told me, 'If someone can challenge me, come now. Otherwise, you should be my servant.'"

Lion arrogantly and proudly said, "Where is he right now? I must challenge him."

Rabbit took the lion to a deep well, pointed to the well, and said, "Look in the well!"

Lion saw his reflection and thought it was his enemy. He bared his fangs at the strong animal in the well. The other one also showed his angry teeth. Then he roared angrily, and the sound echoed back.

Lion could not control his anger and jumped into the well.

Rabbit's intrigue had worked, and Lion went to his final rest in the well.

If you are wise, it is not a problem if you are weak.

The smart rabbit killed the strong king of animals.

(Tsun mo yag, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY-ONE: JUNIPER LEAVES AND WOOL

A herdsman secretly herded his sheep onto his neighbor's fenced pasture, where there was plenty of grass and water. When he saw his neighbor coming, he quickly drove his sheep out and herded them outside the fence.

When the neighbor noticed wool on the juniper tree branches in his pasture, he asked, "Did you graze your sheep on my pasture?"

The man quickly answered, "No, I didn't."

The neighbor asked, "Where did the wool come from if you didn't herd your sheep in my pasture?"

The man replied, "People used wool to mark those trees as sacred."

"OK. Maybe that's true, but where did the sheep dung come from? Did the trees defecate sheep pellets?"

The man had nothing to say, his silence saying everything.

(Dka' thub tshe ring (b. 2001), Smar khams Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY-TWO: STEALING A GOAT

When a man saw his neighbor stealing one of his goats, he asked, "What are you doing? Are you stealing?" as the neighbor was lifting the goat over the wall of his sheep pen.

The neighbor answered, "Why can't I weigh your goat?" as he set the goat down.

The goat owner had nothing to say and walked away.

('Brug 'bum skyid, Smar khams Village. Recorded in her home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY-THREE: ROAD, CAR, GRASS AND SHEEP

A herdsman was driving his sheep along a road when a car crashed into the flock, killing several sheep.

The driver got out of the car and said, "Why did you drive your sheep on the road? Is there grass on the road?"

The herdsman replied, "Why did you drive your car into my sheep? Is there a road on my sheep?"

The driver had nothing to say and paid compensation.

(Phag mo g.yang sgron, Glo rgya Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY-FOUR: A HERDER HAS NOODLES

Once in a Tibetan place, a farmer had a herder friend and invited him to his home. The farmer asked his wife to cook noodles for dinner, knowing that his friend did not know how to eat noodles.

After the noodles were ready, the herder thought it was shameful to say that he didn't know how to eat noodles, so he secretly observed how the farmer was eating. Knowing his friend was watching him, the farmer blew on his noodles before putting a long noodle on his tongue.

He noticed the herder imitating him.

The farmer then secretly blew on a long noodle until it was cool, put it around his neck, and sucked it into his mouth.

The herder imitated him but put a hot noodle around his neck, which burned his neck. ('Jigs byed 'tsho (b. 2002), Sha rgya Village. Recorded in her home, September 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY-FIVE: CHINESE FATHER AND TIBETAN DAUGHTER

A Chinese man had a Tibetan daughter. While she was fetching water from a stream, she accidentally broke her wooden pail on a big rock. When she returned home, her father asked her in Qinghai Chinese dialect, "*A me liao* 'What happened?'"

She thought he had spoken Tibetan, so she answered, "Mother didn't break the pail."

Her father asked again, "*Zale* 'What happened?'"

Thinking he had spoken Tibetan, she answered that it hadn't hit the ground (*sa*), but had struck a rock.

Her father then had nothing to say.

(Gnam thar gyal (b. 2002), Ru sngun zhol ma Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

#### NARRATIVE TWENTY-SIX: A TIBETAN SPEAKS CHINESE

A Tibetan once learned two Chinese words, *shide* 'yes' and *xiexie* 'thanks', when he visited a Chinese city. Afterward, he enjoyed demonstrating his Chinese "proficiency" to his fellow villagers, who knew no Chinese at all.

One day, someone murdered a person near their village. Many Chinese police officers came. Villagers asked him to talk with the policemen because of his ability in the language. When he approached the policemen, they thought he had come to confess his crime and asked, "Are you the murderer?"

He said, "*Shide* 'Yes'."

After the policemen handcuffed him, he responded, "*Xiexie* 'Thanks'."

(Gu ru rdo rje (b. 2002), Jo ser Village. Recorded in his home, August 2016.)

## TIBETAN TERMS

'brug 'bum rgyal འབྲུག་འབུམ་རྒྱལ།  
 'brug 'bum skyid འབྲུག་འབུམ་སྐྱིད།  
 'jigs byed 'tsho འཇིགས་བྱེད་འཚོ།  
 a ma ཨ་མ།  
 a mdo ཨ་མདོ།  
 bde skyid བདེ་སྐྱིད།  
 bde skyid sgrol ma བདེ་སྐྱིད་སྐློལ་མ།  
 bka' 'gyur sgrol ma བཀའ་འགྱུར་སྐློལ་མ།  
 bkra shis bzang bo བཀྲ་ཤིས་བཟང་བོ།  
 bla ma tshe ring བླ་མ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 brag dkar བྲག་དཀར།  
 bsod nams rdo rje བསོད་ནམས་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 bsod nams rgyal བསོད་ནམས་རྒྱལ།  
 btsun mo yag བཙུན་མོ་ཡག།  
 chos dbyings rgya mtsho ཆོས་དབྱིངས་རྒྱ་མཚོ།  
 chos mtsho ཆོས་མཚོ།  
 chos tsha ཆོས་ཚ།  
 dga' ldan དགའ་ལྷན།  
 dge lugs pa དགེ་ལུགས་པ།  
 dka' thub tshe ring དཀར་ཐུབ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 dmangs glu དམངས་གླུ།  
 dngos grub sgrol ma དངོས་གྲུབ་སྐློལ་མ།  
 don grub དོན་གྲུབ།  
 don yod don grub དོན་ཡོད་དོན་གྲུབ།  
 don yod rdo rje དོན་ཡོད་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 dran gsal དྲན་གསལ།  
 g.yang skyabs rdo rje གཡང་སྐལ་བསྐྱེད་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 g.yang skyid sgrol ma གཡང་སྐྱིད་སྐློལ་མ།  
 gangs dkar lha mo གངས་དཀར་ལྷ་མོ།  
 gdugs dkar tshe ring གདུགས་དཀར་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 glo rgya གློ་རྒྱ།  
 gnam lha thar གནམ་ལྷ་ཐར།  
 gnam mthso sgrol ma གནམ་མཚོ་སྐློལ་མ།  
 gnam mtsho skyid གནམ་མཚོ་སྐྱིད།

gnam mtsho yag གནམ་མཚོ་ཡག  
 gnam thar rgyal གནམ་ཐར་རྒྱལ་  
 gu ru rdo rje གུ་རུ་རོ་རྗེ།  
 jo ser ཇོ་སེར།  
 klu mo ལུ་མོ།  
 klu mo 'tsho ལུ་མོ་འཚོ།  
 klu rgyal tshe ring ལུ་རྒྱལ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 kun bzang skyid ཀུན་བཟང་སྦྱིད།  
 kun dga' ཀུན་དགའ།  
 kun thar rgyal ཀུན་ཐར་རྒྱལ་།  
 kun thar yag ཀུན་ཐར་ཡག  
 lcags 'bum rgyal ལུགས་འབུམ་རྒྱལ།  
 lcags 'tsho sgrol ma ལུགས་འཚོ་སྦྱོལ་མ།  
 lcags mo tshe ring ལུགས་མོ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 lha mgon rgyal ལྷ་མགོན་རྒྱལ།  
 lha mo sgrol dkar ལྷ་མོ་སྦྱོལ་དཀར།  
 lo sar ལོ་སར།  
 mang ra མང་ར།  
 mdzo mo མཛོ་མོ།  
 mgo mang མགོ་མང་།  
 mgon po rdo rje མགོན་པོ་རོ་རྗེ།  
 mgon skyabs མགོན་སྐབས།  
 mkha' 'gro tshe ring མཁའ་འགོ་ཚེ་རིང་།  
 mkha' rgyal thar མཁའ་རྒྱལ་ཐར།  
 mtsho lho མཚོ་ལྷོ།  
 mtsho sngon མཚོ་སྔན།  
 phag mo g.yang sgron ཕག་མོ་གཡང་སྔོན།  
 phag mo lhun grub ཕག་མོ་ལུན་གུབ།  
 phyug mtsho skyid ཕུག་མཚོ་སྦྱིད།  
 rdo ra རོ་ར།  
 rdo rje dngos grub རོ་རྗེ་དངོས་གུབ།  
 rdo rje don grub རོ་རྗེ་དོན་གུབ།  
 rdo rje rgyal རོ་རྗེ་རྒྱལ།  
 rdo rje skyid རོ་རྗེ་སྦྱིད།  
 rdung len རུང་ལེན།

rig 'dzin tshe ring རིག་འཛིན་ཆེ་རིང་།  
 rin chen 'tsho རིན་ཆེན་འཚོ།  
 rin chen lha mo རིན་ཆེན་ལྷ་མོ།  
 rin chen rdo rje རིན་ཆེན་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 rin chen skyid རིན་ཆེན་སྦྱིད།  
 rin chen thar ba རིན་ཆེན་ཐར་བ།  
 rta mgrin rdo rje རྟ་མགིན་རྡོ་རྗེ།  
 rta ra རྟ་ར།  
 rtsam pa རུམ་པ།  
 ru sngun zhol ma རུ་སྤུན་ཞོལ་མ།  
 ru རུ།  
 sa ས།  
 seng rdor སེང་རྡོར།  
 sgrol ma rgyal སྒྲོལ་མ་རྒྱལ།  
 sha rgya ཤ།རྒྱ།  
 shog gu ཤོག་གུ།  
 smar khams སྐར་ཁམས།  
 snying dpal tshe ring སྙིང་དཔལ་ཆེ་རིང་།  
 spyi 'du tshe ring སྤྱི་འདུ་ཆེ་རིང་།  
 ston pa སྟོན་པ།  
 tsha nag ཇ་ནག།  
 tshe mdo skyid ཇེ་མདོ་སྦྱིད།  
 tshe ring rgyal mtsho ཇེ་རིང་རྒྱུ་མཚོ།  
 tshe ring sgrol ma ཇེ་རིང་སྒྲོལ་མ།  
 tshe thar skyid ཇེ་ཐར་སྦྱིད།  
 yong ma ཡོང་མ།  
 zla ba ཟླ་བ།

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CHINESE TERMS

*a me liao* 阿么了

Chanaihai 查乃亥

Dala 达拉

Duola 多拉

Guinan 贵南

Guomaying 过马营

Hainan 海南

Jiaose 角色

Luojia 洛加

Mashigan 麻什干

Qiezha 切扎

Qinghai 青海

Rianxiuma 日安秀麻

Shajia 沙加

*shide* 是的

*xiexie* 谢谢

*zale* 咋了

Zhihai 直亥